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it sweet when much bitterness is tasted. So he cannot tell bitter from sweet.

Little wrong is wrong; everybody condemns it. But the greatest wrong, that of attacking another country, is not only left uncondemned, but is honored and praised. It shows that the world cannot tell right from wrong. This is the way in which the so-called gentlemen under the heaven teach morality and ethics.

A TRENCH-PACIFIST

By C. F. H.

ROMÉO HOULE, twenty-three years of age, is a barber by profession. He is also something of a pacifist, and the sort of pacifist with whom it is difficult to argue, for Roméo Houle has been a soldier. He has spent eleven months on the firing line. He has seen it all. "I slept in my blanket, my first night under fire, with a lump of cheese at my feet, as a bribe to the rats to spare my face." "I have lived daily in dread of bullet, shrapnel, mine, and deadly gas; and nightly in fear of mine and gas—and the man-eating rats."

"Gas? What do you know of it, you people who never heard earth and heaven rock with the frantic turmoil of the ceaseless bombardment? A crawling yellow cloud that pours in upon you, that gets you by the throat and shakes you as a huge mastiff might shake a kitten, and leaves you burning in every nerve and vein of your body with pain unthinkable; your eyes starting from their sockets; your face turned yellow-green.

"Rats? What did you ever read of the rats in the trenches? Next to gas, they still slide on their fat bellies through my dreams. Poe could have got new inspiration from their dirty hordes. Rats, rats, rats—I see them still, slinking from new meals on corpses, from Belgium to the Swiss Alps. Rats, rats, rats, tens of thousands of rats, crunching between battle lines while the rapid-firing guns mow the trench edge—crunching their hellish feasts. Full fed, slipping and sliding down into the wet trenches they swarm at night—and more than one poor wretch has had his face eaten off by them while he slept."

In the late winter of this year he returned home miraculously unscathed. "Of my original company, the Fourth of the Fourteenth Battalion, Third Brigade, First Canadian Division, which marched away to that hell at Laventie and Ypres so gayly—500 brave boys—I am one of the sixteen who survive." Sixteen out of five hundred!

Roméo Houle's story is printed in *Current History*, published monthly by the New York Times. It is worth reading in its entirety, for it is vouched for by the editors of that publication, who have looked up his record and found it straight and true. Mr. Houle, who is, by the way, an American, and owes his present discharge to that fact, does not try to harrow the reader. But he does tell what he went through himself, and the opinion of modern warfare that it gave him.

"You wouldn't believe all I have seen, all I have left. Ah, no; you would say, 'Roméo Houle, you are lying,' were I to tell you some unbelievable things that I have really lived through. Men go mad over there. When

you know what life in the first-line trenches is like you will wonder that I have returned, and that, having returned, I am still in my right mind. Sometimes, at night, I find myself again carrying the wounded back after the charge, and listening to dying soldiers telling me to look into blood-soaked pockets for last letters to their sweethearts or mothers back home. "Tell mother that I have received the Blessed Sacrament before the battle began." I hear their breaking voices whisper, "Tell mother," while the thundering artillery pours its curtain of fire upon us, and our boys throw back from their rude, hand-made sling-shots their deadly 'jam-pots.' "Tell mother!" I think all the battle front is crying now those words. O Mother of God, hear them and end this needless butchery!"

Roméo Houle has survived the curtain of fire, the gas; he has been hurled in the air by a shell explosion; has seen his comrades die in hundreds all about him; has witnessed mine explosions under the enemies' trenches, and has known the hourly dread of being caught in one himself—"it was more terrible than gas poisoning to think that at any moment the earth would be rent and you would be thrown a thousand ways at once." He and his comrades have made friends with the Germans in the opposing trenches; have agreed with them not to fire, and kept the pact for days, till "the officers, discovering this pact of peace, moved us to another part of the trenches. Because friendships start easily between hostile bodies, they kept moving a regiment from one part of the trenches to another. . . . We had no heart in the butchery, Germans, or we French Canadians." "I take no credit for any special courage in the field. If I was brave, it was because I had to be so. We were all brave who kept our senses."

Roméo Houle is now shaving customers with a steady hand at Lamothe's shop, 1335 Purchase street, New Bedford, Conn. And Roméo Houle, the volunteer, the soldier, the survivor of Bloody Ypres, and many another fight, is a pacifist. He has a message for all America, for all the world. It is a message of interest to every pacifist and every advocate of militarism in this country. This is the way he phrases it, at the end of the narrative that he and his friend and collaborator, David MacGregor Cheney, a writer on the New Bedford *Standard*, composed:

"If you Americans have the choice, never vote for war. You do not know what war is, who have not seen it. I did not know. I could not know. It is not like the sanguinary conflicts of the Civil War—they were little fisticuff battles compared to this gigantic slaughter of heroes. Now calm science, cruel, unutterably cruel, calculating a hundred deaths with the precision of the crazed murderer, lays out the battle schemes, and goes seeking through science for new forms of death more horrible than the old. We fight underground and undersea, on the land and in the air. We fight with fire, with steel, with lead, with poisons, with gases, with burning oil. We are lower than the brutes, lower than the lowest and most degraded forms of life.

"I do not know why we fought. No Archduke's little life was worth the titanic butchery of the world war. The beginning was petty and small. And I, looking back at horror, horror, cannot forget the extraordinary friendships we made with the men in the enemy's trenches. We were both only human beings, after

all, Fritz and I. We had no wish to kill each other. We had much rather sit at the same table, with our wives and children around us, and talk of gardens, of fair pictures, and of great books. But for our officers and the nations which they represented peace would have been declared right there in the trenches—and that by the soldiers themselves.

"I am only Roméo Houle, a barber. But I have lived—God, I have lived! All the slaughter of heroes by the Meuse and on the Belgian border and in northern

France has passed before my eyes. And I, Roméo Houle, am forced to write this:

"Man is given life to enjoy it, not to destroy it. We cannot make ourselves better or the world we live in more worth while by killing each other like beasts gone mad.

"I thank God that the nightmare is over. Only in my dreams do the cannon roar over the line at Ypres. And such dreams are quite terrible and real enough. I hope never to fight again."

BRIEF PEACE NOTES

. . . In the recent crisis over the Carrizal incident in Mexico many forces for peace in the United States were mobilized in a short space of time for definite expression of opinion against war. The more important of these are as follows:

The American Union Against Militarism called together an informal conference of three prominent Americans and three representative Mexicans in Washington, July 5, for the consideration of border problems. The conferees were David Starr Jordan, of Leland Stanford, Jr., University; Moorefield Story, of Boston; Amos Pinchot, of New York City; Dr. Atl and Senor Luis Manuel Rojas, of Mexico City, and Modesto C. Roland, of Yucatan. Later, such Mexican authorities as Lincoln Steffens; Prof. Leo R. Rowe, of Pennsylvania University, and Dr. J. W. Slaughter, of Pennsylvania, were called in in consultation.

The American Federation of Labor called a Pan American Labor Peace Conference in Washington July 8, which was attended by several Mexican labor leaders, among them Carlos Loveira and Baltazar Pages, of Yucatan; Luis N. Morones, of Mexico City; S. Gonzalez Garcia, of Orizaba, accredited representatives of the International Labor Conference; Guillermo Q. Carvallo, formerly mayor of Vera Cruz; Domingo Ramos, of the Federal Board of the Mexican Federation of Labor, and José G. Alonzo, secretary of the same organization. A statement was issued calling upon the laborers of the United States to aid the Mexican revolutionists by co-operative means in maintaining the "cause of humanity and democracy." Plans were also made for the formation of permanent Pan American Federation of Labor.

The World Peace Foundation issued number two, Vol. I, of *The Spot-Light*, a one-page publication, devoting it to the Mexican crisis in an excoriating article on the munitions manufacturers of which the first sentence is characteristic: "For months past these soulless, conscienceless, murder-planning grafters have been creating sentiment against the people of other nations. . . ."

From the conference of the Federation of International Polity Clubs in Cleveland, a telegram signed by students from twenty-four colleges and universities was sent to the President urging the creation of a joint commission to take over the responsibility of preserving order on the border.

The Massachusetts Peace Society sent circular letters to all its members immediately upon the news of the release of the prisoners taken at Carrizal, urging that

individual letters and telegrams be sent to the President requesting him to consider the plan for mediation submitted by the South and Central American republics.

. . . What women may do for the world's peace is the burden of an open letter addressed to "The Women of the United States," issued by the Society of Friends of Philadelphia. Here the definite belief is stated that war, no matter what justice is claimed for it, "nevertheless violates and retards the realization in human society of those principles for which women should ever stand—the integrity of the home, the Christian nurture and education of the young, the abolition of social and economic evils, the establishment of justice and humanity." The message to the women is that "there is a better way" than war, and that in the seeking of that better way women play a fundamental part and one of the greatest importance to all mankind. The letter, of which copies may be obtained at 304 Arch street, Philadelphia, continues in part as follows:

"We believe that it is women's highest mission to train the young in family and school to recognize that jealousy, rivalry, covetousness, contempt, and exploitation bear the fruits of wrath as surely in international as in domestic relations, and that the true foundations of nations as of families are laid in mutual generosity, helpfulness, sympathy, and justice. We therefore plead with you to work with us and with all men and women the world over who have seen this vision.

"We entreat that in our present national crisis you bend the energies of mind and spirit against the forces that would fasten upon our country the blighting effects of militarism. That you especially exert your influence against the subjection of school boys to military training, whereby the present would bind upon the future the burden of an outgrown system.

"That you study with open minds the cause and results of war, the progress that has already been made in international law and arbitration, the probable influence on the future of war of the increasing number of 'conscientious objectors' in warring nations, and the reasons why our own country is peculiarly fitted by geographical position, traditions, and ideals to be the leader and example in a world movement toward a peaceful solution of international problems.

"And, last of all, we beg you to consider what may be for the future the surest defenses of our life, liberty, and sacred honor; what peaceful methods of protection, education, and enlightenment our country may apply to free her irritated and harassed neighbor on the